

WHOLE SCHOOL CODE OF CONDUCT

Adopted by Crabtree Farm Primary School – adopted 7th October 2026

1. Introduction

1.1 The governing body of Crabtree Farm Primary School has adopted this Code of Conduct for all school employees and those working in the school. Responsibility for day-to-day implementation rests with the headteacher. Where the concern relates to the headteacher, the matter should be referred to the Chair of Governors.

1.2 The Code is designed to protect pupils, staff, the school, the governing body and the wider public by setting out the standards of conduct expected in a school setting. It cannot cover every eventuality; staff should seek guidance from their line manager, the headteacher, the Chair of Governors or the school's HR Team if they are unsure of the standards expected of them.

1.3 Staff must also comply with statutory legislation, Keeping Children Safe in Education, safer recruitment requirements, data protection/UK GDPR, health and safety duties, national and local terms and conditions, and all relevant school policies. Teaching staff are also expected to comply with the Teachers' Standards, including Part Two: Personal and Professional Conduct.

1.4 Failure to comply with this Code may result in action under the school's disciplinary procedure, which could lead to dismissal. Where relevant, concerns may also be referred to external agencies or regulatory bodies.

2. Purpose, scope and principles

2.1 This Code provides clear guidance on expected standards of behaviour. School staff are role models and are in a position of trust and influence. Each individual has a responsibility to maintain their own reputation and the reputation of the school, whether inside or outside working hours.

2.2 This Code applies to all staff employed by the school, including the headteacher, teachers, support staff, casual workers, agency and supply staff, staff in units or bases attached to the school. The principles of this Code should also be reflected in the conduct of governors, volunteers and others working on behalf of the school, whilst recognising they may be subject to separate codes or governance frameworks.

The same expectations should be shared with regular visitors, peripatetic staff, contractors and volunteers, recognising that external staff may also be subject to their own employer's code of conduct.

2.3 Where staff comply with the Code, the school and, where relevant, the local authority, will support and protect them against unjustified allegations of wrongdoing.

3. Standards and behavioural expectations

3.1 All staff are expected to give the highest possible standard of service to pupils, families, colleagues and the community. Staff should provide advice and support with impartiality and professionalism and should raise deficiencies, impropriety or breaches of procedure with the appropriate person without fear of recrimination.

3.2 All staff have the right to be treated with respect and have a duty to treat others with respect. Staff must be sensitive to different needs, attitudes and lifestyles, oppose discrimination, help end bullying and be prepared to be challenged over their own behaviour.

Behavioural expectations in school

- Lead people: act with professionalism, take responsibility and set a positive example.
- Be inclusive: value diversity, make fair decisions and consider individual circumstances.
- Change and innovate: contribute constructively to school improvement and safe, effective working practices.
- Collaborate: work cooperatively with pupils, parents/carers, colleagues, governors, trade unions and partner agencies.

3.3 Staff should participate in appraisal/performance review arrangements relevant to their role and engage constructively with support, feedback and improvement where required.

4. Setting an example and public trust

4.1 Staff must demonstrate high standards of conduct so that pupils can observe and learn appropriate behaviour. Offensive, discriminatory, bullying, intimidating or undermining language or conduct is not acceptable.

4.2 Staff should consider how comments, actions, emails, messages, gestures, images and social media activity may be perceived. Conduct must not bring the school, school community or employer into disrepute, whether during working time or when staff could reasonably be associated with the school.

4.3 Staff must avoid putting themselves at risk of allegations of abusive, inappropriate or unprofessional conduct and should seek advice where a situation creates uncertainty or potential perception of impropriety.

5. Safeguarding pupils, staff and visitors

5.1 Everyone who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play in safeguarding. School staff are particularly important because they may identify concerns early and help prevent situations from escalating.

5.2 Staff have a duty to safeguard pupils from harm, abuse and maltreatment, including physical abuse, sexual abuse, emotional abuse, verbal abuse, neglect, exploitation, bullying, harassment, unequal treatment and discrimination.

5.3 Staff must report concerns about a pupil to the Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) without delay and must follow school safeguarding and child protection procedures. Staff should read and understand the relevant parts of Keeping Children Safe in Education and complete safeguarding training required by the school.

5.4 Staff must not promise confidentiality to a pupil where information indicates a safeguarding or welfare concern. Concerns about an adult's behaviour towards a child must be reported to the headteacher or, where the concern relates to the headteacher, to the Chair of Governors. Where appropriate, concerns may also need to be reported to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) or other external safeguarding partners.

5.5 Staff may report urgent safeguarding concerns directly to an appropriate external agency where circumstances warrant this. If a situation is serious or life-threatening, staff should ring 999 immediately and then follow the school's reporting arrangements.

5.6 Staff must not use personal mobile phones, personal cameras or personal devices to record or photograph pupils. School equipment should be used in line with school policy. Smart watches and personal devices should not distract from supervision or pupil contact time.

6. Raising, reporting and whistleblowing concerns

6.1 Staff are expected to raise concerns promptly and using the correct procedure. Concerns about working relationships should normally be raised through line management, the school's resolution/grievance arrangements or other agreed internal procedures.

6.2 Where staff identify something seriously wrong, including malpractice, safeguarding failures, health and safety concerns, fraud, harassment including sexual harassment or third-party harassment, discrimination, victimisation or bullying, they should raise this with the headteacher or another appropriate senior person. Where appropriate, staff may use the school's whistleblowing/confidential reporting procedure.

6.3 Concerns will be handled sensitively and, as far as possible, confidentially. Staff should be aware that an investigation may require a statement or may reveal the source of information.

7. Allegations, criminal charges and changes to status

7.1 Staff must disclose without delay to the headteacher if they are arrested, interviewed by police in connection with a potential criminal matter, facing allegations, cautions, charges, convictions, reprimands, warnings, ASBOs or any police intervention that could have a bearing on their role, safeguarding responsibilities or the reputation of the school.

7.2 Staff must also disclose changes in DBS status, professional registration, prohibition from teaching, barring, childcare disqualification, relevant care/court orders, mandatory licences, right to work, or any conduct process relating to safeguarding matters in another employment or voluntary role.

7.3 Staff should inform the headteacher of any close association with a person facing serious allegations or criminal charges where this could have a bearing on their role, safeguarding responsibilities, professional judgement or the school's reputation.

7.4 Failure to disclose relevant information may lead to disciplinary action and could result in dismissal. The implications of any disclosure will be assessed fairly and proportionately, taking into account safeguarding, role requirements and risk.

8. Attendance, timekeeping and wellbeing

8.1 Staff are expected to be ready and available for work during their scheduled hours and to start work punctually. Staff must comply with school procedures for reporting sickness absence, providing fit notes/medical certificates where required, recording working time and taking breaks.

8.2 Staff should cooperate with absence management, occupational health, wellbeing or return-to-work arrangements where appropriate. Abuse of sickness absence procedures, failure to

report absence correctly or falsification of timesheets/attendance records may be treated as a disciplinary matter.

8.3 Staff should tell their manager if they do not feel capable of carrying out their duties safely and correctly, or if they have a medical condition or change in health that may affect their work. The school will seek to support staff appropriately, including consideration of reasonable adjustments where applicable.

9. Smoking, alcohol, drugs and substance misuse

9.1 Staff must comply with the school's smoke-free arrangements. Smoking, vaping or use of similar products is not permitted on school premises, in school vehicles, at the school gate or in any other setting where staff are supervising pupils or representing the school, unless the school's local policy expressly permits a designated arrangement that does not compromise pupils or the school's reputation.

9.2 Staff who have taken alcohol, prescribed medication, non-prescription drugs or any other substance that may affect their ability to carry out duties safely, correctly or legally must notify their manager before starting work. Managers may prevent staff from undertaking duties where there is a risk to the individual, pupils, colleagues or others.

9.3 Working under the influence of alcohol, drugs or other substances, consuming such substances at work, or encouraging others to consume substances in a way that affects their duties may be treated as a disciplinary matter and may also have safeguarding or criminal implications.

10. Professional attire, ID and appearance

10.1 Appearance is a matter of personal choice, but staff must present themselves professionally and appropriately for their role and duties. Clothing should be practical and safe for the tasks undertaken, for example PE, practical activities, site duties or personal care tasks.

10.2 Staff should be mindful of health and safety implications, including suitable footwear, jewellery, lanyards, protective clothing and any uniform or PPE requirements. Clothing or presentation must not cause offence, embarrassment or create a safeguarding or safety concern.

10.3 Staff representing the school externally should dress with regard to the audience and context. Staff should carry/display identification where required by the school or when undertaking school business off site.

The following (in italics) is an addition to the NCC model policy and provides specific guidance in respect of professional attire for all Crabtree Farm Primary staff members:

- *Jeans and denim clothing are not acceptable (this includes educational day trips)*
- *Sports/active wear is only acceptable if worn to teach PE or in a more physical role*
- *Smart trainers as part of a smart outfit are acceptable*
- *Non-robust flip-flops and sandals are not acceptable footwear, due to safety, however more robust styles are permitted e.g. Birkenstocks*
- *Tattoos and body piercing should be covered, within reason, to maintain a professional appearance*
- *Skirts should be worn at a reasonable length*
- *Shorter dresses or skirts should be worn with leggings*
- *Tops should not expose underwear or bra straps, they should cover the shoulders and not expose the chest. Strappy vest tops are not acceptable. T-shirts/tops should be smart and not have large graphic designs*
- *Tailored shorts are acceptable*

11. Conduct and professional relationships within work

11.1 Staff are expected to take professional responsibility for fulfilling their role, meeting deadlines, following reasonable management instructions and raising issues early where they may prevent work being completed safely or on time.

11.2 Staff must communicate effectively and fairly with pupils, parents/carers, colleagues, governors, visitors, contractors and partner agencies. Staff should treat others with professional respect and courtesy, de-personalise issues and seek constructive solutions.

11.3 Staff must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with pupils, parents/carers and service users, past and present. Staff must not form inappropriate relationships or place themselves in situations where favouritism, bias, grooming, abuse of position or conflict of interest could be alleged.

11.4 Staff must inform the headteacher/line manager in confidence if they have a close personal, family, private, business or financial relationship with a pupil, parent/carer, colleague, governor, contractor, prospective employee or other person which could create a conflict of interest or perception of bias. Alternative working, supervision or management arrangements may be required.

11.5 Where an employee's role involves possible oversight of their own child, wider family member or someone with whom they have a close personal connection, clear boundaries must be agreed and maintained. Staff must still respond to emergencies where a child is at risk of significant harm.

12. Conduct outside work, outside commitments and additional employment

12.1 Staff must not engage in conduct outside work which could seriously damage the reputation or standing of the school, the local authority/academy trust or the school community. This includes conduct via social media, messaging, verbal conversation, written communication, photographs or public behaviour.

12.2 Staff intending to undertake additional paid work, self-employment, voluntary work, tutoring, babysitting or other outside commitments that may affect their school role should discuss this with the headteacher before commencing. The school will consider working time, rest breaks, safeguarding, health and safety, conflicts of interest, performance and reputational risk. Staff must not use confidential information obtained through their employment to secure private tutoring arrangements. Babysitting and private tutoring are private arrangements and not undertaken as representatives of the school.

12.3 The school will not unreasonably prevent outside work, but it must not conflict with the school's interests, weaken public confidence, compromise safeguarding, involve use of school resources or be undertaken during school working time.

13. Confidentiality, disclosure of information and information security

13.1 Staff must treat information obtained through their work as confidential and must handle personal data in line with data protection legislation, UK GDPR, school procedures and any relevant local authority/academy trust requirements.

13.2 Confidential information about pupils, parents/carers, colleagues, governors, contractors or school business must only be shared with those who have a legitimate professional need to know, or where there is a legal duty or safeguarding requirement to disclose it.

13.3 Staff must not deliberately access, use or pass on information obtained through employment for personal gain, curiosity, gossip or any unauthorised purpose. Staff must not remove, retain or share school information when they leave employment unless expressly authorised.

13.4 If in doubt about whether information can be disclosed, staff must seek advice from the headteacher, DSL, data protection lead/Information Governance route or appropriate senior person before releasing it.

14. Use of school/Council resources, IT, phones and social media

14.1 School equipment, buildings, grounds, vehicles, materials, funds and electronic systems are provided for school business. They must be used responsibly, lawfully, safely and in line with school policies.

14.2 School or Council IT systems, phones, email accounts, internet access, apps and networks must not be used for offensive, illegal, discriminatory, unsafe or unauthorised purposes. Usernames, passwords and access credentials must be kept secure and must not be shared.

14.3 Personal use of school IT or equipment, where permitted, must be limited, reasonable, not during pupil-facing/paid working time unless authorised, at no cost to the school, and must not create reputational or safeguarding risk.

14.4 Staff must exercise caution when using social media or messaging platforms. They must not discuss or publish confidential or inappropriate information relating to pupils, parents/carers, colleagues, governors, services, school business or the school community. Staff should avoid online connections with pupils and should follow school policy in relation to parents/carers and former pupils.

14.5 Staff must not speak to the media or make public statements about school business without prior agreement from the headteacher or governing body, as appropriate. Trade union representatives acting in their official capacity should communicate clearly, appropriately, respectfully and professionally.

15. Honesty, integrity, financial conduct and declarations of interest

15.1 Staff must maintain high standards of honesty and integrity, including in handling money, finances, school property, purchasing, procurement, expenses, timesheets and any claims or records.

15.2 Staff must not commit, assist or conceal fraud, theft, bribery, corruption or misuse of public funds. Deliberate falsification of documents, retention of money not due, misuse of school resources or use of public funds for personal advantage may constitute gross misconduct and may be referred to the police.

15.3 Staff must declare personal interests, financial or non-financial, that could conflict or appear to conflict with school duties. Examples include relationships with suppliers or contractors, involvement in recruitment/pay/disciplinary decisions involving relatives or close

associates, acting as a governor elsewhere where this creates a conflict, links to organisations seeking school business, or any personal advantage connected with school procurement.

15.4 Declarations should be made in writing to the headteacher or other relevant senior person as soon as the staff member becomes aware of the interest. Where the headteacher has an interest, it should be declared to the Chair of Governors. Staff should distance themselves from decision-making where a conflict exists or could reasonably be perceived.

16. Gifts, hospitality, sponsorship and external activities

16.1 Staff must not accept gifts, hospitality, loans, fees, rewards or advantages that could be seen to influence their professional judgement or create an obligation. Gifts or hospitality from suppliers, contractors or organisations seeking school business must not be accepted unless expressly permitted under the school's Gifts and Hospitality Policy and recorded where required.

16.2 One-off token gifts from pupils or parents/carers, such as at the end of term, may usually be accepted where modest and appropriate. Cash or gift vouchers from service users/families should not be accepted unless the school's policy expressly permits a clear local arrangement. If in doubt, staff must seek advice before accepting.

16.3 Gifts from staff to individual pupils should not normally be given, as these may be inappropriate or misinterpreted. Any sponsorship arrangement involving the school or an outside organisation must be approved by the headteacher/governing body and must not create a conflict of interest.

16.4 Invitations to give external lectures, presentations or advice linked to the staff member's school role should be discussed with the headteacher in advance. The school should determine whether it is appropriate, whether it is undertaken in work time and how any fee should be treated.

16.5 Staff must declare links or affiliation to groups or individuals within the community (e.g. community associations, religious groups, or community leaders, elected Members, secret societies etc.) where there is the potential for allegations of bias and/or for you to be exposed to inappropriate pressure.

17. Appointment, recruitment and other employment matters

17.1 Staff involved in recruitment or employment decisions must follow safer recruitment requirements and school procedures. Appointments and employment decisions must be based on merit and the requirements of the role.

17.2 Staff must not be involved in decisions relating to appointment, promotion, pay, appraisal, discipline or other employment matters where the person is a relative, partner, personal friend or anyone else with whom a relationship exists that could compromise or be perceived to compromise professional judgement. Such interests must be declared as soon as they arise.

17.3 Concerns about staffing matters should normally be raised through agreed internal procedures before being escalated externally, unless whistleblowing, safeguarding or other urgent reporting routes are appropriate.

18. Political neutrality, governors and community relationships

18.1 Staff must serve the school community impartially. Staff should not allow personal or political opinions to interfere with their work, pupils' education, professional advice or relationships with parents/carers, governors, councillors, community groups or partner organisations.

18.2 Staff should take particular care where they have links to community groups, religious groups, pressure groups, political groups, elected members, governors or local organisations which could create allegations of bias or inappropriate pressure. Potential conflicts should be discussed with the headteacher.

18.3 Staff in politically restricted posts, if applicable, must comply with the restrictions explained to them by their employer.

19. Professional registration, licences and employment checks

19.1 Staff whose role requires professional registration, membership, qualifications, licences or statutory checks must maintain these and inform the school immediately of any change. This may include qualified teacher status, teacher prohibition orders, DBS, right to work, childcare disqualification, driving licence, first aid, specialist qualifications or professional body registration.

19.2 Failure to maintain a requirement necessary for the role may mean that the staff member is unable to fulfil their duties and may lead to action under disciplinary, capability or other appropriate procedures.

19.3 Staff are expected to comply with reasonable requirements for employment checks, including repeat DBS checks where applicable, health surveillance or occupational health where role or health changes require this.

20. Health and safety

20.1 Staff have a duty to take reasonable care of their own health and safety and that of pupils, colleagues, visitors and others affected by their work. Staff must follow safety rules, procedures and instructions, use PPE where required, and complete relevant training.

20.2 Staff must report health and safety concerns, accidents, near misses, unsafe equipment, unsafe premises or unsafe working practices to the appropriate manager immediately. Staff should not continue with an activity where there is a serious and imminent risk unless appropriately trained and authorised to manage that risk.

21. Disciplinary action and failure to follow the Code

21.1 Failure to meet the standards in this Code may result in action under the school's disciplinary procedure, which could lead to dismissal. Some concerns may also require referral to the LADO, DBS, Teaching Regulation Agency, police, local authority, professional body or other statutory/regulatory agency.

21.2 Managers should address concerns fairly, proportionately and promptly, including informal support or guidance where appropriate. Serious, repeated or deliberate breaches may be treated as misconduct or gross misconduct depending on the circumstances.

Appendix 1: Nolan Seven Principles of Public Life

Selflessness: Act solely in the public interest and not for personal financial or other benefit.

Integrity: Avoid obligations or interests that could influence official duties.

Objectivity: Make decisions on merit, evidence and fairness.

Accountability: Be accountable for decisions and actions and submit to appropriate scrutiny.

Openness: Be as open as possible, giving reasons for decisions unless confidentiality or public interest requires otherwise.

Honesty: Declare private interests and resolve conflicts in a way that protects the public interest.

Leadership: Promote and support these principles through leadership and example.

Appendix 2: Declaration checklist

Staff should seek advice and make a written declaration where any of the following apply or may reasonably be perceived to apply:

- Personal, family, financial or business relationship with a pupil, parent/carer, colleague, governor, contractor, supplier or prospective employee.
- Involvement in recruitment, pay, appraisal, disciplinary, grievance or procurement decisions affecting a relative, partner, close associate or connected organisation.
- Additional employment, self-employment, private tutoring, babysitting, consultancy, voluntary work or external role that could affect school duties, working time, safeguarding or reputation.
- Gifts, hospitality, sponsorship, fees, discounts or advantages offered because of the staff member's school role.
- Membership of a secret society or organisation that could give rise to perceived bias or conflict.
- Arrest, police interview, allegation, charge, conviction, caution, reprimand, barring/prohibition, DBS or professional registration/licence change, or conduct process linked to safeguarding.
- Any uncertainty about confidentiality, information sharing, media contact, social media, political activity or use of school resources.

Appendix 3: Document history

<u>Revision date</u>	<u>Version</u>	<u>Author / owner</u>	<u>Summary of changes</u>
March 2021	4	Nottingham City Council HR Advisory Service	Model school Code of Conduct revised.



July 2026	5	L Hobbs	Updated to reflect Nottingham City Council employee Code of Conduct, including behavioural expectations, attendance/timekeeping, wellbeing, smoking/substance misuse, relationships, outside commitments, information security, resources/IT, declarations of interest, gifts/hospitality, professional registration/checks, media, sponsorship and health and safety. Adapted for school-based staff and safeguarding context.
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